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Abstract of the paper of Ukraine

Ukrainian space activities on the threshold of the new millennium

1. Since the convening in 1982 of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE II), there have been considerable changes in the nature and content of international space activities, with a dramatic increase in the level of international cooperation and a greater appreciation of the potential of space to provide solutions to humanity's common problems.

2. Space activity in Ukraine forms an integral part of international efforts in the area of space exploration and applications. The Ukrainian space programme takes account of the goals and activities of the international organizations to which Ukraine belongs, as well as its national obligations under bilateral and multilateral agreements. In 1998, the Ukrainian parliament approved the new national space programme for 1998-2002, which is directed to a great degree towards international cooperation. Ukraine assigns great importance to its collaboration with China, the Russian Federation, the United States of America and Eastern European countries. The conclusions and recommendations of the Regional Preparatory Conference, which took place in January 1999 in Bucharest, reflect Ukraine's interests also.

3. Ukraine possesses unique scientific, technological and industrial capacities to conduct successful space activities in the interests of socio-economic development and to apply space technology in finding solutions to regional and global problems.

4. Ukraine's contribution towards resolving global problems through the use of space applications is aimed at the following:

(a) Preventing the degradation of vital natural systems;

(b) Providing warnings of environmental, man-made and space disasters;

(c) Developing fundamental scientific knowledge of near and deep space and of the most basic laws governing processes in the universe;

(d) Dissemination of scientific and technological knowledge obtained as a result of space research;

(e) By means of space technology, ensuring access to information sources and educational programmes throughout the world.

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5. An important place in Ukraine's space programme is occupied by research on near-Earth space and the Earth's surface:

(a) Ukrainian scientists are participating in the Interball project, an extremely large-scale international project directed towards research of the ionosphere;

(b) The investigation of ionospheric-lithospheric relations—a problem of primary significance in terms of pure science and practical applications—is the focus of an international scientific project entitled "Warnings". The success of the project will mark a qualitative leap forward in terms of both broadening knowledge of ionospheric processes and laying the foundations for a future-oriented space system for the monitoring of natural and man-made disasters;

(c) One of the most important challenges being tackled by Ukrainian specialists is to study the sea's surface, atmospheric and oceanic dynamics, and marine temperatures and colours by means of satellite data, such research constituting a basic component of environmental monitoring and surveillance of navigational hazards.

6. The following are the main areas in which international cooperation is being conducted in connection with remote sensing based on data from the Ukrainian Sich satellites, the Russo-Ukrainian spacecraft Okean and other similar facilities:

(a) Rational utilization of natural resources;

(b) Monitoring of sources of pollution of the atmosphere, water and soil;

(c) Operational monitoring of particularly hazardous natural features and industrial installations with a view to providing timely warnings of disasters and catastrophes and improving the effectiveness of disaster-management measures;

(d) Monitoring of factors influencing the generation of meteorological and climatic conditions for purposes of meteorological forecasting;

(e) Establishment of a system for modelling processes on the Earth with a view to predicting changes in the ecological balance and devising environmental protection techniques.

7. Ukraine's geopolitical position and its scientific and technological potential make it eminently qualified to take an active part in the establishment of the Global Information Infrastructure. We regard space telecommunications technology as one of a number of means of effectively ensuring Ukraine's integration within the community of developed countries.

8. The research programme conducted on the International Space Station will be one of the most important such programmes in the new millennium. The form of Ukraine's participation in this programme is currently under discussion.

9. The exploration and peaceful uses of outer space provide a means of achieving mutual understanding among nations through collaboration in the tackling of global problems. Ukraine regards itself as an active participant in this process, which is crucial in ensuring the pace of social progress.